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Volume 1 No. 5 • February 17, 1994
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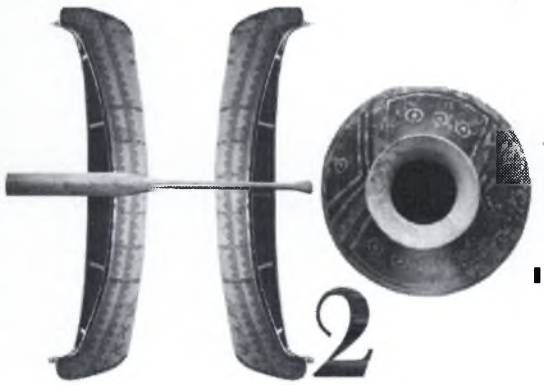

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND
water
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE

The main objective

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Speakers

The speakers at the conference will include representatives of indigenous peoples, governments, planners and developers from Canada, the United States, Australia, Norway, India, Chile, Peru, Columbia and Mexico.

Participants

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Registration fees

Before March 11th $445 (CDN), after the March 11th $500 (CDN)
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G1R 2K5

Simultaneous translation will be provided in French, English and Spanish. Arrangements for accomodation are available.

FOR INFORMATION Tel.: (418) 648-2104, Fax: (418) 648-0991

The colloquium will be held in Montréal, Québec on April 13, 14, 15, 1994 at "Centre Sheraton", 1201 Blvd. René Lévesque West.

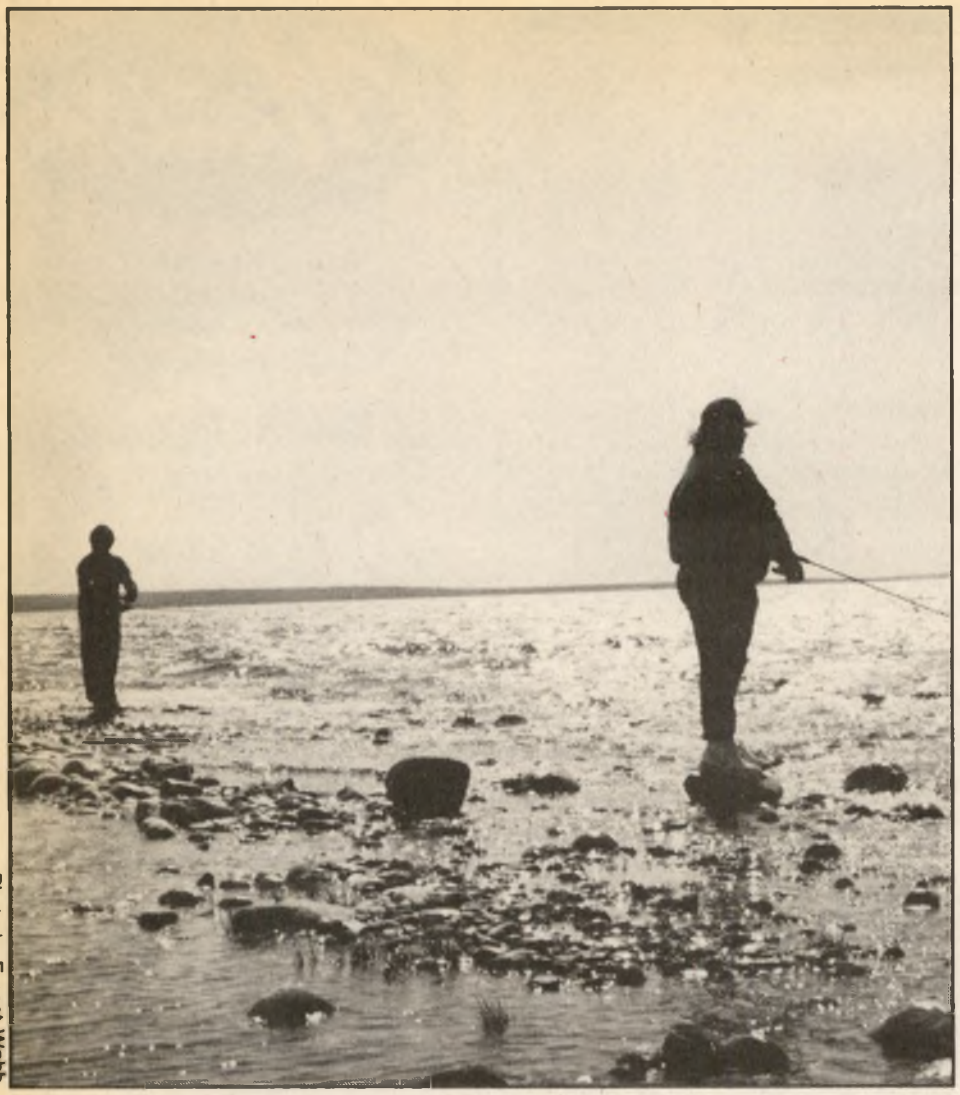

Photo by Ernest Webb

The McDonald's factor

"Do you have any McDonald's restaurants up there?" is a question I hear from time to time. Now what is that actually supposed to mean? That's a pretty straight-forward question. But what is the meaning behind it?

Does the person really want to know if we have any McDo's back home? Or does he want to know if we're "civilized"?

What does it mean to be civilized? It depends on which factor you use. Take, for example, the McDonald's factor—is the person asking if we have a strip mall and all the trappings that go with it? What about factories and power plants? But what do these usually accompany? Undrinkable water.

Up north, drinking water was the norm. Dipping your cup into any pond or stream was taken for granted. Coming home from James Bay toward the river you can taste the difference in the salinity. Tasting occasionally, you could taste the fresh water from the river getting fresher. Now you think twice before doing that. Even the rainwater which collects on the rocks is questionable, with all this talk about acid rain and cadmium and so on.

So now we have to use the "Native Factor" (common sense): "Is there any drinking water there?" When was the last time anybody drank straight from the St-Lawrence or the Hudson River for that matter? When will it be safe, if ever, to drink from those rivers again? Now up north we have to start asking if it is safe to drink from this or that river.

As "progress" rolls along, so with it the rivers also. For the sake of our children and those not yet born, I hope we don't have to keep asking that Question for every river.

BY ERNEST WEBB

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JANUARY 17, 1994

THE SINS OF OUR SACRED PLANT

Let's be truthful and honest. I'm an addict. Like all addicts I need my daily fix. I'm not alone, there are a lot of us out there. Normally we are just law-abiding citizens enjoying our cancer sticks. But as a Chinese curse has it: "May you live in interesting times."

I, personally, find the times very interesting. Last week, the provincial government lowered its taxes on cigarettes by $11 and the federal government followed with a $10 tax-cut. Cigarettes now cost as low as $2.50 per package of 25 here in Montreal. Personally, being an addict, I know the prices I've paid for cigarettes in Mistissini in years gone by. The last time I bought cigarettes back home, they cost me $4.50. Doesn't that mean that in some way I paid taxes while residing on reserve land? Could be financially interesting for some bands to look into.

You could say the tax money is put to good use helping to prevent smoking. I've heard of a few good prevention programs, but where are the government-funded programs to *stop* smoking? Most of the effective programs I've heard about are out of my pocket-book range. Life insurance expresses how bad smoking is by charging you high rates. The stats are there but I guess the cheap fix will keep me going.

I'm not complaining. I've always considered tobacco taxes to be "sin" taxes. Something non-smokers could at times feel morally superior for. And, well, does an addict ever really complain too much about the price?

Yes, they do, and in interesting ways. Take, for example, a farmer in Quebec. He attempted to lease out his land in small plots. Included in the price were his professional services to grow tobacco on your behalf. You can guess how fast the government lawyers descended upon this quickly forgotten hero of the tobacco revolt. Now we needed something Kennedyish to highlight these interesting times. It seems you could buy cigarettes in Canada, send them to the U.S., allegedly "smuggle" these same cigarettes back into Canada, then sell them for three or four dollars and still make reputedly an ungodly profit.

Did I not say that some native bands might find this financially interesting? Understand, I am not advocating or supporting smuggling. I am merely asking how much we were illegally taxed for cigarettes on Indian reserves. Perhaps the money would be better spent at home. I'll gladly donate my tobacco tax rebate in advance to the Mistissini band.

Isn't it interesting all the trouble our sacred plant seems to be causing?

BY WILL NICHOLLS

the Nation

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Photo by Luis Eguren

CREES OUTNUMBERED 3:1 AT ENTITIES

Despite sinking millions of dollars into Cree economic-development efforts, non-Crees outnumber Crees three-to-one at the three largest Cree economic entities, according to figures from the Grand Council.

The situation is even worse when just full-time jobs are considered. Cree Energy, Air Creebec and Cree Construction employ 253 non-Crees in full-time posts, compared to only 55 Crees--a ratio of five-to-one.

"There's too much dependency on non-Crees to run these companies," conceded Rod Pachanos, chair of the Cree Board of Compensation. "When they started, it was supposed to be for the Crees, by the Crees. It didn't turn out that way."

But Pachanos said in a phone interview from Val d'Or that Crees themselves are partly to blame for the problems. "We can't put someone in there who isn't qualified. Nobody took it upon themselves to get training. We can't force someone to get training."

Figures from the Grand Council show that only 31 per cent of the 665 workers at Cree Energy, Cree Construction and Air Creebec last year were Crees. Crees are also more likely to be doing part-time jobs instead of full-time work, which tends to be more secure and well-paid. Only 36 per cent of the Crees employed at the entities were full-time, compared to 55 per cent of non-Crees.

Pachanos said Cree economic-development companies are currently restructuring to hire more Crees in top positions and cut persistent financial losses. "There has been an application of Cree values in how these companies are going to be run. For two years, we have been trying to improve the situation."

The Board of Compensation is the body that administers the $130-million heritage fund granted to the Crees under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement of 1975. Pachanos is also president of the James Bay Eeyou Corporation, which administers $100 million granted to the Crees in 1986 under the Opemiska Agreement.

The administration of the Board of Compensation came under fire in a recent study done for the Grand Council. The study found that the Board of Compensation has invested $43 million in the Cree economic entities during the last decade. But due to persistent losses, those companies are worth only $23 million today.

Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come expressed concern about the study's findings in a letter to Cree leaders on Jan. 19. "The analysis shows that we have not been very successful at creating Cree employment and that Creeco is not profitable."

Pachanos wouldn't comment on Coon Come's letter, beyond saying, "What he was referring to was something in the past. That's why I didn't get excited about it. We can't undo things that happened in the past. Hindsight is 20-20. If we had a crystal ball, we'd never make mistakes."

BY ALEX ROSLIN

YOUTH WORRIED ABOUT JOBS

BY ALEX ROSLIN

The lack of jobs for Cree youth could force many to leave Cree communities in search of employment, says James Shecapio, president of the Cree Youth Council.

"Hundreds of young Crees are coming back to the communities with higher education. They may look outside Cree communities if there are no jobs. That's unfortunate because young Crees aspire to work for the Crees in any way they can."

Shecapio called on Crees to develop a job-creation plan that respects traditional values. "There is no specific plan with that mission," he said. Such a plan is especially needed, he added, to give direction to CreeCo., the holding company for Cree Construction, Air Creebec and the other economic entities. "CreeCo. won't be able to accommodate young Crees unless it is reviewed. There needs to be a global plan in their efforts."

Over 60 per cent of Crees are youth (aged under 29). Unemployment among Crees as a whole runs above 30 per cent. Yet, 70 per cent of the 665 employees at the three largest entities are non-Crees.

Shecapio would like to see Cree economic entities enact mandatory replacement policies to bring in more Crees. As well, he called for the promotion of small business projects and entrepreneurship at the local level. He also expressed concerns about money left in Cree heritage funds. "Will there be any heritage funds left if we keep bailing out Air Creebec?"

Shecapio flew to Ottawa last week to discuss the lack of jobs with Deputy Grand Chief Kenny Blacksmith. Shecapio also wanted to press for the creation of a Cree Elders' Circle and to discuss concerns about next year's Youth Council budget. The youth have learned that their request for a $256,000 budget has been significantly trimmed to only $160,000. The budget may go even lower before the trimming is over. "There are not enough funds there to meaningfully pursue the aspirations of the youth," Shecapio said.

But the meeting didn't go ahead because Blacksmith was unexpectedly called away to Montreal. At press time, Shecapio hoped to fly to Montreal to catch up with Blacksmith.

The Nation welcomes letters to the editor, comment pieces and other submissions from our readers. We strive to reflect all opinions in our pages.

Dirty racial tactics

Letter to The Nation:

I have, up until now, kept a low profile with respect to the two businesses that I own and operate under the names of Hughboy Records and Mike's Studio. However, I must speak to all of you who have obviously taken a very racial attitude towards the efforts that myself and my husband have given to all of you.

Let me explain something to you all. I am the owner of these businesses. I am a Cree Indian and my husband is a non-native. Is there something wrong with that? Some people are constantly trying to undermine the efforts of myself and my husband by personally attacking my husband with all kinds of dirty racial tactics, and I am quite fed up with this.

My husband and I have been married for over 10 years now, and believe me, we have been through it all and have heard it all. I commonly hear people say, "A Cree woman that marries a white man, it will never work out and they will divorce." And you know who they always blame? The white man. Well, I blame it on the Indian people who are constantly picking on the Indian woman and their never-ending racial discrimination against the white man husband. Eventually the marriage will take sides and that perfectly good relationship collapses because of the pressures put on them by racial discrimination within their own community.

Photo by:Luis Eguren

My husband has been living here in Wemindji since 1981, which is over 13 years amongst the Cree people. He has worked in Wemindji all this time and has devoted the last 13 years of life helping and trying to make this community a better place for all of us. He has helped me set up a small recording business and record distribution company to encourage and support the Cree artists in the region.

He is now the director of economic development in Wemindji and is also our board member representing Wemindji on the Cree Local Management Board, the Eeyou Economic Council, the Cree Business Development Centre and the Canada-Quebec Consultative Committee for Northern Quebec.

Is this person so terrible that we must constantly ask him to kneel before us, jump when we say jump or even leave town if we say leave town? My husband is a good person and is married to me, he is a resident of Wemindji, Wemindji is his home and he will stay here as long as he desires. For those of you who have still not understood, I suggest that you carefully read the Cree-Naskapi Act and the Charter of Human Rights of Canada.

We must not constantly confuse our judgement of a person because of the colour of their eyes. Fellow Cree People, I beg of you to wake up and stop this discrimination. We are only harming our own destiny by making enemies with our neighbours. A person is a person and a human is a human. We all live within the same world.

Gloria Hughboy
Wemindji

NOTES

You may have noticed that our subscription rates have been fluctuating a lot in past issues. This was due to uncertainty about our expenses and distribution. We think we've finally settled on some permanent rates which you'll find in our masthead on page 4. We're sorry for any inconveniences. We hope you bear with us as we grow and establish ourselves.

WHERE TO FIND YOUR COPY OF *THE NATION*. In the following communities, *The Nation* is sold by Northern Stores for $1.50: Chisasibi, Waskaganish, Mistissini, Wemindji, Whapmagoostui and Eastmain. In Nemaska, we are sold by the General Store. In Waswanipi, we are available through Sidney Snowboy Orr. In Ouje-Bougoumou, *The Nation* is available in a local outlet. *The Nation* is also now available in four communities in Ontario through Northern Stores: Moose Factory, Moosonee, Fort Albany and Kashechewan. In the meantime we will try our best to reflect the Cree way of life in terms of the news, stories and images. But we still need your help send us a story, photo or artwork, whatever. With your help we can serve the Cree Nation with a magazine we can all be proud of.

CORRECTION

Due to a transcription mistake, an error found its way into our interview with Natural Resources Minister Christos Sirros last issue. On page 15, we asked Sirros a question which started: "Many Crees are concerned that the equivalent of one trapline has been clearcut since the mid-1970s." The sentence should have read, "Many Crees are concerned that the equivalent of one trapline has been clearcut each year since the mid-1970s."

Photo by Luis Eguren

HYDRO MEDDLES IN GW REVIEW: CREES

Hydro-Quebec has asked the Grand Council of the Crees to change the Cree composition of the federal and provincial committees studying the Great Whale River Project, according to Bill Namagoose, executive-director of the Grand Council. The Quebec utility has complained that two of our representatives are not "neutral," Namagoose said.

The committees are responsible for conducting community consultations into the Great Whale project over the next six months. The committees are composed of representatives chosen by Quebec, Ottawa and the Grand Council.

Namagoose particularly objected to the request for the changes because it came from a Hydro-Quebec lawyer during discussions about funding for the Grand Council's participation in the Great Whale impact review.

"It is unethical to bring up something like this while discussing funding that Hydro-Quebec controls," Namagoose said. "We have been guaranteed the right under the James Bay Agreement to appoint anyone we see fit. For Hydro-Quebec to try to influence that choice is definitely unethical."

A Hydro spokeswoman denied that the utility ever made such a suggestion. "We never, never asked for such a thing. That's not true. We never asked for any members to be removed," she said.

BY WILL NICHOLLS

She added that the utility wants the governments of Quebec and Canada to help finance the Grand Council consultations, as they have in the past.

The utility put out a press release on Feb. 10 stating that an agreement has been reached with the Grand Council on community consultations as called for in the Great Whale environmental-impact guidelines. The utility says the Grand Council will be entirely responsible for conducting the consultation, using the methodology of their choice and hiring the necessary resource personal. The Crees agreed to provide the results within six months, and will be provided with $468,500 in three instalments by Hydro-Quebec to do the job.

At the end of the press release, the utility also says, "Since 1992, Hydro-Quebec has repeatedly reminded the Grand Council of the Crees of its willingness to define the most appropriate methodology for the consultation in the Cree communities."

Brian Craik, federal-relations director for the Grand Council, described the situation differently. "Since 1992, Hydro-Quebec has tried to dictate the manner in which consultation would take place. Their proposed methodology was both faulty and inadequate. It's only now that Hydro-Quebec has partially come to its senses."

"GREAT WHALE IS THE BEST": HYDRO UNION

Hydro-Quebec and the utility's employees remain enthusiastic about the Great Whale project despite statements by Natural Resources Minister Christos Sirros that Quebec's energy policy is being re-examined. "We support the development of Great Whale," said Raymond Gravel, president of the union representing Hydro-Quebec's 7,000 blue-collar workers. "We are convinced that Great Whale is the best solution. You won't find anything less polluting."

Hydro spokesman Guy Versailles, for his part, downplayed the utility's energy surplus of nearly 4,000 megawatts. "By no means do we have so much capacity that it will delay any projects," he said. Versailles added that much of Hydro's overcapacity is in fact reserve energy needed for emergencies like power-line failures. Without these reserves, the actual surplus is only 1,000 megawatts, he claimed.

Sirros, who is also native-affairs minister, told *The Nation* last month that Quebec would not proceed with new hydro-developments unless the need for the projects is proven. Quebec has an overcapacity of nearly 4,000 megawatts. Sirros has also said that Great Whale would be delayed for at least a year, but that it would be built eventually.

But Gravel, the union leader, called for construction to start as soon as possible on the $13-billion Great Whale project, saying that Quebec still needs the extra energy. "It's not for this year or the next year. It will be eight or 10 years before it's built." He said the Great Whale project, which would flood 4,400 square-kilometres of forests, is necessary to create jobs.

- Alex Roslin

FORUM FOILED BY CLICHE CONTRACT: CREES

The Grand Council of the Crees has pulled out of an international conference on First Nations and hydro-developments because of fears that the event is biased in favour of big utilities like Hydro-Quebec. The Grand Council learned that one of the main organizers, Quebec environmentalist David Cliche, has a contract with Hydro-Que-

BRIEFS CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

bec to meet with U.S. environmental groups.

The forum, planned for April in Montreal, will coincide with Hydro-Quebec's 50th anniversary. It is sponsored by the World Bank, Ottawa, the Quebec government, Hydro-Quebec, Manitoba Hydro and two international environmental agencies. Also participating is Inuit leader Charlie Watt, president of Makivik Corporation.

David Cliche is working with Watt and a local environmental group to organize the three-day conference. Cliche also heads a coalition of groups taking part in the environmental review of the Great Whale project. He is also the Parti Quebecois's liaison officer with the First Nations.

Crees had originally looked forward to taking part in the conference, said Brian Craik, the Grand Council's federal-relations director. "Cliche was clearly on Hydro's side," said Craik.

Cliche responded by saying half the speakers at the conference are indigenous people; the other half are hydro promoters and planners. "I don't think it's biased at all," he said. "The Crees didn't want Hydro-Quebec to have a speaker. I think that's unfair. They're trying to undermine the credibility of the conference." Cliche conceded that he has a contract with Hydro-Quebec, but said that hasn't made him biased.

-- Nation staff

Diabetes epidemic in Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan natives are experiencing an epidemic of diabetes and are far more likely than non-aboriginal people to suffer life-threatening complications from the disease, says a report in the Canadian Medical Association Journal.

The report says the province's First Nations people are 16 times more likely than non-natives to develop kidney failure from diabetes. Native diabetics are also seven times more likely to get a condition called end-stage kidney failure, which requires treatment by dialysis or transplant.

Diabetes was unknown among aboriginal peoples in Canada early in the century. The study's author says that it has spread because of the adoption of a European-type lifestyle and diet. The incidence of diabetes is higher among people who are obese.

-- Nation staff

Power glut in Ontario

A massive power glut at Ontario Hydro is leading to new layoffs at the financially troubled utility. *The Toronto Star* reported on Feb. 4 that Ontario Hydro plans to chop up to 1,669 more jobs. That's on top of 10,000 jobs axed last year when the utility reduced its workforce by more than one-third.

A two-month review of the utility is also recommending the closing of 19 nuclear reactors and other power plants across the province because of the excess capacity. The shut plants are worth $2.3 billion.

Ontario Hydro has a capacity of over 30,000 megawatts, yet its peak demand

BRIEFS CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Are You Native? Have You Ever Thought of Becoming a Nurse?

The **National Native Access Program to Nursing (NNAPN)**, is a nine-week spring program that assists students of Native ancestry to gain entrance to university degree Nursing programs across Canada. This year the program begins on May 2. *Potential students should apply now, by contacting:*

The Co-ordinator, NNAPN, College of Nursing,
University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK S7N 0W0

Phone 1-800-463-3345, or locally 966-6224.

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We wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

this winter was only 24,000 megawatts. One megawatt is the amount of electricity needed to power 10,000 lightbulbs, each rated at 100 watts. For comparison, Hydro-Quebec has a capacity of 33,600 megawatts. Its peak demand was just under 30,000 megawatts in early January.

-- Nation staff

U.S. ECOLOGISTS BLUNDER

A U.S.-based environmentalist group has walked into controversy after planning a demonstration against Hydro-Quebec without bothering to consult the Crees or major Quebec environmentalist organizations.

The Native Forest Network decided last November to hold rallies on April 14 in Chicago, New York City, San Francisco, Montreal and in other countries to protest the 50th anniversary of Hydro-Quebec. But Crees and others didn't learn of the actions until January when the U.S. group put out a press release saying the utility plans to commit "eco-genocide." The communique continued, "HQ plans further ecocide to the flora and fauna and genocide, this time to the Innu, with the SM-3 project." Another communique prepared by the group said, "The multi-billion dollar James Bay Project is, in essence, an ecological and genocidal holocaust." The group goes on to claim that the Great Whale project will destroy "15 major rivers."

The group's communiques provoked the ire of Francois Tanguay, director of Greenpeace's energy campaign in Quebec. "This type of language cannot work here," he told *The Nation*, saying use of words like "eco-genocide" and "holocaust" is counter-productive.

"We're not saying Hydro-Quebec is nice. I don't mind if they want to do something against Hydro-Quebec. But from a quick survey of groups in Quebec there's hardly any support for this action. Nobody wants to be part of it."

Tanguay said Quebec environmentalists haven't planned any action of their own to counter the utility's 50th anniversary. Instead, he said Greenpeace will announce a new study on energy efficiency in early April to coincide with the annual meeting of eastern Canadian premiers and New England governors. The study shows Quebec could drastically cut energy demand by improving efficiency, Tanguay said. "We have hard numbers on how they could kill the dams if they really tried."

Native Forest Network coordinator Orin Langelle said the term "genocide" was used because hydro-projects are destroying Cree culture. But he promised not to use the term any more due to the objections.

-- Alex Roslin

MOHAWKS SCAPEGOATED: NATION OFFICE

Tensions are flaring in Mohawk communities near Montreal after statements by the federal government and RCMP that outside police may raid the communities in search of alleged cigarette traffickers. RCMP commissioner Norman Inkster recently told reporters, "Should circumstances require, it's entirely possible that we will end up enforcing the law on a native reserve." Prime Minister Jean Chretien had similar words in the House of Commons, according to an article in the *Montreal Gazette*. "This enforcement will be applied everywhere and anywhere there is illegal smuggling activity."

The statements, the boldest so far threatening police raids, provoked consternation among Mohawks. "Native communities once again are being scapegoated for something that's not their problem," said Andrew Delisle Jr., liaison officer for the traditionalist Mohawk Nation Office of Kahnawake. "It's the same old business. They've got the law in their pocket and they're using it to destroy our nation."

Delisle said the RCMP presence outside Kahnawake has been stepped up. "They are driving right to the perimeter and shining spotlights at our checkpoints as if to say, 'Look, we're back.' It's childish. I will personally hold those officers responsible if they provoke an incident."

An internal RCMP memo obtained recently by a Toronto newspaper says the Mounties planned to raid several Mohawk communities in Quebec and Ontario. The Surete du Quebec has also appealed to the Quebec government for powers to intervene against alleged cigarette smugglers in the Mohawk communities. The stepped-up police activity is part of a government anti-smuggling plan, which included a $3 tax-cut for each pack of smokes.

Mohawks say the 1794 Jay Treaty grants them the right to bring goods across the U.S. border without paying taxes, but the government doesn't agree. Statistics Canada reports that Mohawks control only five per cent of the illegal cigarette trade. The rest is controlled by organized crime. But according to some estimates, 70 per cent of contraband cigarettes enter Canada through the Mohawk community of Akwesasne which straddles the Canada-U.S. border.

-- Alex Roslin

Photo by Luis Eguren

Masters of Conquest

If the Cree people had read the James Bay Agreement of 1975, translated word for word into written Cree, it is "highly doubtful" they would have ratified it, says Matthew Mukash, chief of Whapmagoostui. "We weren't given enough time to have the text of the Agreement translated into own language using Cree syllabics, so our people could effectively comprehend its contents," he said in an interview with *The Nation* about the issue of extinguishment and surrender of aboriginal rights.

It was only years later that Mukash actually read the James Bay Agreement. That's when he found out the agreement "extinguished" Cree aboriginal rights. Mukash said extinguishment is part of a centuries-old scheme "to take and consolidate control over our lands" by the government. "The lives of aboriginal peoples in this hemisphere have been carefully manipulated and smashed from day one by foreign forces," he said. "They were masters of conquest."

Mukash, whose community will be most affected by the planned Great Whale project, issued a call to the Cree Nation for unity and for a concerted effort to fight back. "The Crees must sit down and have very serious discussions among themselves."

by Will Nicholls

The Nation: **Chief Mukash, many Crees, especially our youth, are discussing the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. I wanted to get your opinion of two sections of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement of 1975.**

In section 2.1, Crees and Inuit agreed to "cede, release, surrender and convey all their Native Claims, rights, titles and interests, whatever they may be, in and to land in the Territory and in Quebec, and Quebec and Canada accept such surrender." In section 2.6, Crees and Inuit agreed to federal legislation that extinguishes all their "native claims, rights, title and interests."

Mukash: There are certainly many opinions regarding these clauses. I am not a lawyer. I can only give you my opinion based on my personal research.

In order to understand what has happened to our lives as aboriginal peoples—not only in relation to James Bay project, but since our first encounter with Europeans—a brief history of Canada is essential. Each aboriginal nation had a system of self- government based on the traditional values and beliefs of its members.

While we had no trouble surviving without foreign intrusions, in a matter of centuries since the arrival of the Europeans we are barely surviving as peoples.

Over time, the Europeans who landed on this side of the Atlantic gradually increased in numbers, imposing their laws and systems of governments, and outlawing ours. All this had one goal—to take and consolidate control over our lands, the land they now call Canada.

Interestingly, an English king issued a proclamation in 1763, the famous Royal Proclamation. This imperial legislation recognized the presence of aboriginal peoples in Canada and stated that we were not to be disturbed or molested, and that our lands were not to be taken from us.

What are the concepts of surrender and extinguishment?

The intent is to take our lands—all of them. But they were faced with the "moral" problem, being "fair English and French-

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Photo by Will Nicholls

men": How do you do that when these lands clearly belong to the natives? Well, you dream up some concepts to make it all "legal"—a concept that aboriginal peoples are savages and don't have concepts of government or land tenure, and just use the land like the deer. Or a concept that lands are empty.

The governments then dreamed up a concept called "surrender and extinguishment." They used it hundreds of times elsewhere in Canada before they used it on the Crees in the 1970s. This concept says that if you get the native people whose land you want to sign a piece of paper saying they have surrendered all their lands, then the Crown has extinguished those rights and that's that. No matter if the native people concerned are tricked, defrauded, don't speak English or French, or don't understand what's happening. No problem, the land is yours!

The fact is also that Canada and Quebec would never have signed an Agreement with the Crees without such clauses, because they had not fulfilled the requirements of the 1912 Quebec Boundaries Extensions Act.

What is the Quebec Boundaries Extensions Act?

What is Quebec today and a portion of Ontario were in the last century called Rupert's Land. King Charles, who had never been there, gave it as a present to his cousin Prince Rupert. During French rule and later during the English rule, Quebec was just a narrow strip of land—actually Iroquois and Abenaki and Atiquamek and Montagnais lands along the St-Lawrence River.

In 1898 and again in 1912, Inuit, Cree and Algonquin lands in what is known today as Northern Quebec were granted to Quebec without our knowledge. Canada placed a condition on this "grant"—that Quebec must first negotiate a surrender of aboriginal rights over this territory before exploiting the resources there. Canada may have wanted a voluntary surrender of those rights so as to get around the terms of the 1763 Royal Proclamation regarding aboriginal rights.

The interesting thing is all these so-called claims and transfers to the Crown, to Prince Rupert, to Quebec, took place without our being told!

So the 1912 Act paved the way for the surrender and extinguishment in the James Bay Agreement?

Yes. Quebec politicians were reluctant to accept the restriction on development in the 1912 Act. In the early 1970s, Quebec built a major highway into the heart of Cree traditional hunting territory, Eeyou Astchee, without consulting the Crees who lived and survived off the land for thousands and thousands of years. Without warning, Quebec began building hydro-electric installations on Cree ancestral homeland, impounding rivers and the very heart of Cree culture and survival.

Only as a result of pressure from the Crees opposing the James Bay project did Quebec eventually agree to enter into an agreement. Quebec felt it had to comply with the 1912 Act because the general public was aware of the issue as a result of lobby efforts of the Crees.

[Premier Robert] Bourassa's tactic was to spend as much money as possible and get manpower and equipment to the territory, so it would be difficult to reverse his government efforts to develop the north. In my opinion, the "balance of convenience" was a predetermined argument in favour of the Quebec government.

By this argument, the judges justified to themselves with nice language the stealing of our lands and the damaging of our rights and our way of live. Everything was very well planned to ensure that Quebec's goal to take control of the resources in the north would come about.

Do you think the Crees were misled into believing they had no other option except to sign the Agreement?

There are certainly many schools of thought on this one. It is important to remember the government of Canada is founded under the same principles as the European system of governments. They were masters of conquest. The psychological tactics used by governments to conquer aboriginal and other peoples around the world obviously had been long-developed by the time the Crees had to deal with the Canadian federal and Quebec governments.

Instead of using the military to conquer us, the government used bulldozers, our isolation and our ignorance of these devices and questionable "legal"—but totally illegitimate—concepts.

When analyzing the events that have taken place since Columbus landed in America, it is easy to see that the lives of aboriginal peoples in this hemisphere have been carefully manipulated and smashed from day one by foreign forces. The Crees were no different. We tend to regard ourselves as inferior to other

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societies because of the forced dependence on modern tools and medicine, the impact of diseases, welfare, income security and other factors. We have become defeatists. Such are the results of the psychological tactics of governments.

We have to overcome these attitudes. We must remember it was the aboriginal peoples who helped the first Europeans survive when they arrived. During the fur trade era, the skills of aboriginal people were exploited by the Hudson Bay Company. This is what made the company so prosperous as a business entity.

Actually, it was because of the fur trade that Canada became independent, economically and politically. Aboriginal peoples ought to be thanked for this contribution, but that never happens.

It has been said the Crees were under duress and misled in the negotiations on the James Bay Agreement. Is this true?

Given the circumstances we faced in the early 70s, I do not think anyone can deny we were forced to negotiate and had no practical alternative but to sign.

Our leaders no doubt negotiated under duress. The bulldozers were destroying our traplines as our leaders negotiated. The federal government threatened to cut our funding if we did not sign. Although we initially won in court, the judgement rendered in our favour was immediately over-turned. The Supreme Court of Canada had failed us. We were being told by two levels of government that we had no rights, that we were squatters on our lands!

Deadlines were imposed upon us. No negotiation session ever took place on Cree lands. Booze often fogged the minds of our leaders as they negotiated. They were kept off-balance by the constant demand to always fly south and north for months and then years.

The governments did not deal with us as equals. We weren't given enough time to have the text of the Agreement translated into own language using Cree syllabics, so our people could effectively comprehend its contents.

No government representatives would ever sign an agreement on behalf of the nation they represent if it is not written in the language of that nation.

I am certain few Crees, if any, would have ratified the Agreement if the extinguishment clause had been translated literally into written Cree. Besides, the rights we supposedly gave up were not defined at all in the Agreement. The Agreement simply reads "whatever they may be," referring to these rights.

Should our leaders have insisted on a translation?

Not really. As with the content of the Agreement, I do not think they were given much choice. Canadian law establishes that there are only two official languages in this country—French and English. If the Crees hunters and elders had read the Agreement, translated word for word into written Cree, it is highly doubtful they would have ratified it.

I am sure the governments knew this, so they imposed deadlines on us. In 1994, the impact statement of Hydro-Quebec in relation to the proposed Great Whale River Project is being translated into Cree. We were never given that chance back in 1975 in regard to the original agreement.

How was the surrender and extinguishment clause explained to you?

It wasn't. There is no way to explain the surrender of rights in Cree. For one thing, there is no Cree word for "rights." Rights in English refer to very specifically drafted laws. Historically, the Cree people have developed values which are well understood by everyone in Cree society. They are a natural part of our life on the land. We could never have thought that anyone would come and challenge this by splitting hairs about what it all meant.

What was your understanding of the events leading up to the signing of the Agreement?

I was at the community meeting when our advisors broke the news. They said we had no choice; the project would go ahead whether we signed the proposed agreement or not, because we had lost in court. The contents of the Agreement-in- Principle were briefly explained. There would be compensation, income security for hunters and the federal government would continue to provide the same services it did at the time.

The Crees would give up only the portion of their land that would be underwater. To me, this was bad but seemed to make sense. The rest of the Territory would be divided into three categories for different uses. There was no mention of giving up all the land in exchange for government-recognized rights. We understood the Crees were only agreeing to the construction of the La Grande Project.

I did not even know that the Great Whale and NBR projects were mentioned in the Agreement until I first read the Agreement in the early 80s. It was only then that I saw Section 2.1 and 2.6. No one I knew in 1975 ever understood or ratified these clauses. We did not even know they were there!

What exactly did the Crees surrender?

The Crees never surrendered anything, period. Surrender and extinguishment of fundamental human rights is not possible. It is illegal, illegitimate and morally wrong. You could not surrender your Creator-given rights if you tried. It's like telling someone, "Although you have legs to walk with, you no longer can walk because you surrendered your Creator-given rights to walk." We're talking about fundamental human rights here, our relationship with our lands, our connection with the earth.

In the Agreement, we are asked to surrender our Creator-given rights to our land, to a nation-state which is created by Man. Instead of our Creator, Canada now controls and determines what our rights are and ought to be through its laws. The fate of those rights are then determined by the nation-state through the process of interpretation in the courts.

Aboriginal rights, therefore, could eventually be taken away anytime. For example, although we may believe that our rights to hunt, fish and trap over our Territory are protected under the Agreement, the right to practice these rights diminish as more land is developed. The strategy of governments is to eventually assimilate all aboriginal peoples into the "mainstream society." We must not allow this to happen.

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...of Conquest

Photo by Luis Eguren

It is easy to see then, that the Crees were misled.

Well, our advisers sure could have done a better job at advising us properly. For instance, a band election was due in June 1974 in Whapmagoostui. A new Chief and two Councillors were elected. I was one of the two Councillors. The Cree Nation advisers apparently said it was better to have the same people in the Council because they had a better understanding of the issues currently discussed.

The people of Whapmagoostui were never advised to ratify the continuation of the Band Council's term, which ended in June 1974. So the results of the 1974 Band Elections were forgotten. Just a little over a year later, the chief whose term should have ended in 1974 signed the James Bay Agreement.

Did the Crees give up too much under the Agreement?

I would say yes and no. "No," because the duress, the lies and our ignorance meant we were forced, tricked and had no choice. This was a plan started hundreds of years ago. It was all made to look as though our leaders made choices, but really, in the end, they had no choices.

"Yes," because it's easy to say, 15 years later, our leaders "gave up too much." Perhaps they did. The Quebec government claims all the resources including the subsurface resource rights on Cree lands. Because of this claim, the rights of Crees to hunt, trap and fish over the Territory can be taken away as the need to exploit subsurface and other resources increases. We have to remember that we lost a court case against the governments under the "balance of convenience" theory, which favours the members of the mainstream society whose numbers are greater than the native peoples in the north. Unless we stop them, the governments will continue to use this argument.

Under the Agreement, the Cree and Inuit aboriginal nations are given only municipal-type powers. We can never expect to get a share of royalties because Quebec claims that this, too, was extinguished in another clause in the Agreement. Compensation is in the form of one-time funding. The government still has to approve by-laws enacted by the community leaders. Governments still have the right of expropriation of all categories of lands, including Category IA lands. This hardly fulfils the aboriginal peoples' concept of self-government. The Agreement grants not self-government powers, but self-administration powers.

But our leaders can never be blamed for this. They did their best under the prevailing circumstances. We must blame those who are really responsible—the governments.

Some Cree leaders say the Agreement has brought prosperity to the Cree Nation in economic terms and in terms of control of the entities created under the Agreement.

What the Agreement simply did was coincide with the delivery of services already guaranteed under Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Health, education, housing, welfare and other programs were already in place prior to the signing of the Agreement, however inadequate. The Quebec Indians and Inuit Association was already in place representing the Crees in negotiations to get proper housing, more effective health, education and other programs.

If you had been a lawyer back in the 1971 representing the Crees, what would you have done?

It's easy to have perfect hindsight. Cree clients had never given up their rights over their ancestral lands or signed a treaty with any government; existing international law had already established that "all peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development."

So I would have asked my clients to make a declaration as a people under existing international law. This would have forced the other side to prove my clients are not a people under international law. For thousands of years, the Crees were an independent people, economically and politically.

But more importantly, I would never have advised my clients to sign an agreement that contains an extinguishment clause.

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TIME *for* CHANGE

Violet Pachanos thinks it's time for a change. "I've been involved in this from the beginning and have seen a lot of things along the way," said Pachanos, the chief of Chisasibi and the only woman chief in all nine Cree First Nations. "I think we have to change the way we do business. You can't keep doing things from the top on down. You have to start from the ground and go up."

And she should know. She's worked for the Grand Council and CRA offices in Ottawa since the two bodies were formed in the mid-1970s. Now working on the local level, she believes Cree regional bodies should be made more accountable to the communities. "When the leadership goes to the elections, I'm not sure they want the mandate from the people. Even to this day, I don't know what the election campaign was about."

BY WILL NICHOLLS

The Nation: Violet, You've been around for a while. What exactly made you interested in politics?

Violet Pachanos: It's hard to say. I guess when I was working for the Grand Council it wasn't so much that I decided to go into politics. It was interesting work but I decided I wanted to work for the Cree people. I wanted to use my knowledge and experience for the benefit of the Crees because I worked in Ottawa before—for the federal government, not Indian Affairs. I guess at that time when the Grand Council was looking for people when they were setting up their office, they approached me. I left the government and started working for the Crees.

Do you think there is a difference in becoming a chief this way with that amount of experience?

I think there is. I was more or less just thrown into it. I was home in Chisasibi at the time when they were having elections and things just happened. I met them head on.

What were your main influences at the time you started out with the Grand Council?

It was the challenges that were there for the Crees. There were not too many people who were available to be able to help with the organization. We were all trying to work together as the Cree Nation.

Your community, Chisasibi, was the most impacted by the hydro-developments. What are Chisasibi's most pressing problems and what solutions are you working on?

The problems are many, in particular the relocation of Fort George. I would say the most pressing issue is the social impacts caused by the fast development. At that time of hydro-development, we were still isolated—not much contact. The communications just weren't there. We had no telephone or television. When hydro came with the develop-

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ment, everything else just came. I don't know if you could say it was forced on the people.

But what about impacts on the economy? You lost the most amount of traplines. That's an economic factor. How are you rebounding from it?

Well, the fur industry or economy based on it is practically nil. Everything sort of came at the same time. The anti-fur movement and animal-rights people damning fur haven't helped the fur industry or us. With the hydro-development, the animals just aren't there. It's now wide open with tourists and sports hunters. Everyone getting at that one little animal that's out there. It doesn't do anything for the fur economy.

You're the closest town to Radisson, an entirely new town dedicated to the dams. What is your relationship with them? Is there any?

There isn't much. It's there and people go there maybe to get a few groceries that aren't available in Chisasibi or the auto mechanics shop. That kind of stuff. There's not much there.

Are you saying Radisson hasn't really integrated into life in the Cree Territory?

No, it hasn't. For example, we met some ladies one time. They had a newsletter and wanted us to contribute to it. They had no idea how native people lived. They asked, "What are those things on the side of the road?" They didn't realize they were teepee frames. They had all kinds of ideas for the newsletter but they didn't even do any research. They didn't realize how complicated it could be. There isn't much integration, but some people have friends there.

Of course, they have a liquor license and a bar in Radisson. So some people go there to drink. It's one of our social problems. People go there now especially after our roadblock went up to confiscate alcohol coming into Chisasibi.

Do you have a commercial fisheries program in Chisasibi?

Not to any scale. It's an exploratory project.

You're utilizing the LG-2 reservoir rather than coastal fishing areas. Is this due to the quality or quantity of fish? Were there concerns about the mercury content?

Yes, there are concerns about the mercury content, but we are still doing research on that. There is still a possibility of doing something with the fish. Not necessarily for eating. People from Chisasibi don't eat the fish from the reservoir. Sportsmen go there to fish, but I believe it's to do with the amount of fish that's in the reservoir. We're looking at a way that something can be done with it.

What do you see as the economic future of the Crees as a nation?

We have to find ways to create jobs. There is a need for a training component to help increase employment opportunities. We have to find innovative ways to stimulate the economy. A lot of the native projects funded by the government don't seem to work. They seem to be make-work. Just enough to get you on unemployment benefits. I don't think this is the answer.

Looking at jobs, the Opemiska Agreement promised Hydro-Quebec would provide Crees with 150 jobs. Yet, a recent study says the actual figures fall far short of this figure. How are you going to get Hydro-Quebec to live up to the Agreement?

I don't know how many people are working for them, but I know some people from Chisasibi are on training for permanent jobs in the La Grande installations. It's a very small number of people, but as I say in Chisasibi, the project is there and we have to live with it. So we have to try and make the best of it. At the same time, people say, "You're working for Hydro-Quebec and you've gotten contracts from them."

But in Chisasibi, what choice do we have? If we don't take those contracts, it just means more people will come in and the Crees will be deprived of that opportunity. The money will just go out of the territory.

As a leader, you are undoubtedly closer to an overall understanding of the projects and the Cree opposition. What would you estimate are our chances of stopping the proposed Great Whale or the NBR projects? How much work is left to stop them or can we stop them? If not, what are we looking at?

I think there is a lot of work to be done if we are going to stop it. I'm not saying there hasn't been work done up to now. I know there's been a lot, but we have a lot more to do if we are going to stop the project. But the way things are going now, from what I see, they're going ahead. Hydro-Quebec hasn't stopped doing any of the work, you know.

Do you think we have to change our strategy in some ways?

Maybe. I'm not saying what has been done hasn't worked. It has worked. After a while, the public or government hear the same things and they don't pay any attention. We have to keep finding different ways to be effective.

In your opinion, what are the biggest problems facing the nation as a whole?

I think it's the changes in the Cree way of life with all the different technologies that are coming at you. It's a challenge for us to be able to try and cope with it all, so we have to find a way to do things without losing our traditions, our beliefs and our values. If you're Cree and you know who you are, then we can handle it. It's not true for just the Crees but other peoples as well. If you have that kind of base, you can cope.

We've heard different suggestions from Cree leaders on change in the way we do business as a nation. What would you like to see changed? Do you think change is necessary?

Yes, I think we have to change the way we do business. I've been involved in this from the beginning and have seen a lot of

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things along the way. Now that I'm at the community level, I certainly see how I think the way things should be done. We see where we've gone wrong and it has to do with the way things were done. You can't keep doing things from the top on down. You have to start from the ground and go up.

You're saying it must start from a community level and go up to a national level?

Yes.

Do you have any final comments for our readers?

We have to take care of what needs to be changed. This is a public magazine so I won't say some things that maybe need to be said. One of my main concerns is that I feel when the leadership goes to the elections, I'm not sure they want the mandate from the people. Even to this day, I don't know what the election campaign was about. I didn't hear about it. So I don't know what the leadership said it would do from the election promises—if there were any. Even after an election, I think the leadership should go back to the communities and ask, "How should I do this?" I feel this is not being done now or in the past.

Do you mean there is a need for a clearer mandate to be given to our leaders and are you talking about all levels of leadership?

Yes, at all levels, with more consultation with the people.

Does this mean that you support Billy Diamond's resolution calling for a Cree Nation Gathering to attain a "Cree vision"?

Yes, I feel that's very important and it can't be done from the top. If we know who we are, it shouldn't take that much to get that vision, mission and goals. Once we get those goals and objectives, we have to go back and review them to see if they still apply. I've said for a long time that the Cree Regional Authority, the way it is right now, needs to be changed. It's not working the way it should be—at least the way it was thought it should be.

When the CRA was established, it was done to suit our purpose and I think it has served our purpose, but its structure hasn't changed. One of the biggest complaints is that it's supposed to be an administrative body, but we feel the communities are not getting all the services.

There's a need to change the system to meet today's needs. The communities weren't organized the way they are now. It's not like the old days with Indian Affairs coming in with a few pennies here and there. Now, we're managing the money and have all these organizations and structures.

We are trying to find our own destiny and make our own decisions. I feel you have to keep going back and looking at what you've accomplished, what your goals are and when that's done look at what changes are needed. We have to change. You know we can't just stop here. I feel that's where we are right now, we need to renew our mission, vision and goals.

WE HAVE THE RIGHT: ALGONQUINS

If anyone has the right to break up Canada, it's the First Peoples of this country, says Albert Tenasco, Grand Chief of the Algonquins. "The non-treaty people of Quebec, the Algonquins, should have the main say in which direction this province should go, not the people that came after us," says Tenasco, a resident of Maniwaki, who represents five of the nine Algonquin First Nations in Quebec. *The Nation* caught up with Tenasco last week at a meeting in Montreal of Quebec chiefs from the Assembly of First Nations.

BY WILL NICHOLLS

What do you consider to be the main issues facing the Algonquin Nation?

Right now, we are looking at land claims. We've been at it a few years now and we're still pushing for it. We're non-treaty people. We've never signed any kind of treaty or agreement with any government.

Do you find any difficulties in dealing with Ottawa or Quebec?

Well, they're willing to accept our claim. There are always some snags, small minor details that have to be taken care of. But the main issue is the Algonquin Nation has got together to push for the land claims.. We submitted our claim about six years ago. There are matters of occupancy. A mix-up on territory. We are trying to get monies to complete research on this.

Will you be looking at something similar to the James Bay Agreement, geared to the Algonquin culture and needs?

Yes, we do have a different culture and will need a different model. There will be some mistakes made, I know that. If you look at the Attikamik/Montagnais, they've been at it for almost 20 years. They're still negotiating today. After 20 years, can you imagine that? Can you imagine how long it's going to take us? In another 20 years, will we be still sitting at the table? Twenty years ago we didn't have this Quebec movement of separation hanging over our heads.

What is your position on separation? Do you think native people have the right to secede if they wish to?

My feeling is always my feeling and I guess I will always feel this way. I think the First Nations of Quebec, they are the ones who should have the main say if anyone's going to break up the country. We are the first occupants of this country. We've signed no agreements and have no treaties. This is what's left after the James Bay Agreement and at that time there was a lot of lost territory that was Algonquin. That's in the territory we have in our claims.

My feeling is that we, the non-treaty people of Quebec, the Algonquins, should have the main say in which direction this province should go, not the people that came after us.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

Trappers in Waswanipi are so frustrated by unrestricted forestry operations on their traplines, they are talking about taking action, says John Kitchen, the chief of Waswanipi. "Our trappers have had enough. I wouldn't be surprised if people started doing things," he said. *The Nation* interviewed Kitchen in Montreal at a meeting of Cree communities affected by forestry.

Your community has been hit the hardest by forestry operations, has it not?

Yes, we're the guys who were first touched by forestry operations. This has been going on for about 20 years now and nobody really did anything. There were meetings set up by the council regarding forestry. Right now as we are talking, the statistics are being put together. Nothing has been done. At this time, I think our trappers have had enough.

I wouldn't be surprised if people started doing things. We have already met with some companies. One of them is Donahue. Negotiations with them are going well.

What's the attitude of the companies you deal?

In the beginning, what they want is time. They want to continue talking for a year or so, or to forget about you after. We have to get back to them all the time and tell them, 'We have a meeting. We've got some things we have to deal with.' Our trappers are not really against the forestry project. It's just that they want to tell the companies where not to cut—the camps, burial grounds, fish spawning areas, calving grounds, hunting spots.

I think one of their main concerns is also compensation. Every time we talk about this with the companies, they get scared. Compensation means many things, you know. It's a lot of things we can deal with. In Waswanipi, we have a forestry company and we work with the trappers. We put monies aside for compensation for the trappers to buy them such things as a new skidoo, repairs to their cabins, that sort of thing. We put this money aside and that's how we work with them. When we talk to the companies about this, they say, 'We don't want to do this, it's too expensive.' If a small company like us can afford it, I don't believe them when they say they can't afford it.

How many traplines would you say have been destroyed or lost?

About 15. It's hard to pinpoint because some are being affected even today as we talk.

Have there ever been any agreements made with forestry companies?

No, not yet. We are just talking about it right now. We're trying to put one together that would apply to all forestry companies in our area. This would be before any other actions like legal or blocking roads or things like that.

Would you say forestry operations around Waswanipi are in the same class as the La Grande project in that there was no consultation before operations started?

Yes, but also it's not the same as the dams. With dams you destroy the land. It's gone, underwater. But with forestry, you cut the trees which later will grow again. In Waswanipi, when we cut, we replant and that's one of the things the other companies don't do. That's one of the things we wanted to show the trappers, 'We'll cut your land, but we'll plant trees also.' There's new game that comes in about three years.

So you're not against the idea of forestry, but against improper development?

Yes, that's right. I'm looking for a way to benefit all. I've met with trappers who are affected a few times. Any time I'm talking to a company, I always try to invite the trappers that are going to be affected. He gives evidence of what is or is not going to be affected.

BY WILL NICHOLLS

Coming On CBC TV

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February 19/20 and 26/27

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See **Maamuitaau** at 8 a.m. Sundays on CBMT, at 6:45 Saturday and 18:00 Sunday on SRC and on CBC North and TVNC.

CBC North

CHARLIE WATT "LIVID" ABOUT DEAL POSTPONEMENT

BY NATION STAFF

Photo by:GW Tundra

Imagine for a moment that the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement went like this: U.S. President Bill Clinton and Mexican President Salinas de Gortari are sitting at the table ready to sign the historic deal. Then they get a message. Brian Mulroney won't be coming. Tell all the reporters and the international diplomats to go home. Canada won't be signing right now. Why? Because Brian Mulroney hasn't read the agreement.

Sound ridiculous? Well, that's exactly what happened to Quebec's Inuit when they flew down to Montreal on February 2 to sign a historic deal on the Great Whale River Project. Hydro-Quebec called the press conference. Fifty four Inuit leaders flew in for the event, but at the last minute, Quebec Natural Resources Minister Christos Sirros backed out.

"The minister has not been briefed and he would like to take more time to study the agreement before going ahead," said Marie-Josee Gagnier, an aide to Sirros.

Gagnier was unable to explain why Sirros wasn't briefed on a deal that has been studied by his department for the past three years.

Makivik members were completely taken off guard. "We have no idea what is going on," said one insider who did not wish to be identified. "Charlie Watt (president of Makivik) was livid. This was his baby."

The Great Whale deal was the product of three difficult years of negotiations between Hydro-Quebec, the Quebec government and the Inuit administrative body, Makivik Corp.

The main deal with Hydro-Quebec is an agreement-in-principle which lays out the compensation to the Inuit if the proposed Great Whale project goes ahead. Details of the compensation package are still secret, but the deal involves a formula under which the Inuit would receive a share of revenues from the great Whale complex.

Three side agreements with the Quebec government would cover water supply and fire prevention improvements in Kuujjuarapik, land re-allocations for Kuujjuarapik and Umiujak, and a new training centre in Inuit territory to prepare the Inuit for construction jobs on the Great Whale Project.

Signing of the deal has now been postponed indefinitely, according to a joint Hydro-Quebec and Makivik press release.

"It's great news as long as Sirros continues not to sign," said Brian Craik, federal-relations director of the Grand Council of the Crees. Craik speculated there may be a power play going on between Sirros and Hydro-Quebec. "It looks like Sirros does not want to be railroaded by Hydro-Quebec into the old mode of 1975."

For Hydro-Quebec, a deal with the Inuit is seen as a crucial counter-weight to the Cree's fierce and high-profile opposition to the project. The Inuit's signature on a deal would give the project some much-needed legitimacy.

But for the Crees, Makivik's position has left many feeling they are being sold out by their Inuit brothers and sisters to the north. Anthony Ittoshat, mayor of Kuujjuarapik, said the Crees have been misinformed about the Inuit position. "We've been portrayed as sell-outs who don't care about the land," said Ittoshat. "This is really unacceptable to us. We're only looking out for our own interests, not to offend anybody."

Ittoshat said his people are just trying to be realistic. "Regardless of what the Cree do, or the Inuit do, or what the Cree and Inuit do together, the Quebec government has all the power to decide. They can overrule the enviromental-review pannels, regardless of their recommendations. They can do whatever they want. It is a very dangerous situation."

Ittoshat said Quebec's 7,000 Inuit do not want the Great Whale project to go ahead, but if it does go ahead, as Ittoshat believes it will, they want some economic spinoffs. "The bottom line is we need some financial things in order to boost our economies. We just don't see any other answers. We have suicides, alcohol, drug abuse. We have no choice but to work together in today's environment to face today's problems."

Ittoshat disagrees that the environmental impacts will be catastrophic for the region. "Get real. Impacts will be there, but not like some people are saying. There's always a way of adapting to nature and nature always adapts."

He said after the project is built, Inuit people will still be able to live partially from the land. "Looking at Chisasibi, you don't have people complaining that there's no animals. It's going to be the same thing as La Grande—a good percentage of our daily consumption will still come from the land."

However, Ittoshat added he's relieved the agreement didn't go through as is, and admitted he made a mistake in negotiating the deal and wants changes. "We don't want to see the project right in our backyard and have Hydro-Quebec force us to accept a minimum agreement."

Forever

You came here with your dream
You gave me your demand
You came here with your scheme
You gave me a wasteland
I listened as the elders cried
Cryin' for the land that's died
Forever...

For our land we pleaded
But from our words you turned away
Our rivers you needed
To turn your night into day
Can't you hear my people cry?
Watching all the rivers die
Forever...

With one stroke of your pen
You drown all creation
You poison our garden
Yet feel no emotion
The awful shame of what you do
Your money will not undo
Forever...

Destruction all around me
Our graves under water
No longer am I free
I'm told I don't matter
The legacy of your crime
Will stand until the end of time
Forever...

Dedicated to the people of Chisasibi
and to the memory of Job Bearskin

by Robbie Niquanicappo - 1993

Justice

There is a young Cree who dreams of the land
He listens to the stories of his fathers of old
And he hears the tales of the Whiteman's great plan
Where his culture will die and his heritage sold

Who can this be who destroys all the land?
Who promises life as he drowns all our graves
In whose wake shall be a ravaged land
No cost is too high for the money he craves

The young Cree he is offered things by his right
In a land in which all men are equal to all
His name on paper he is asked to write
To receive those things which are free to all

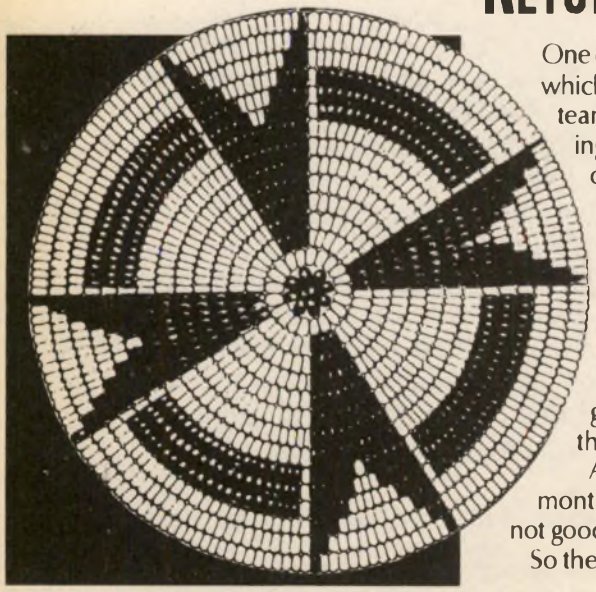
Who can this be who destroys all the land?
Who promises life as he drowns all our graves
In whose wake shall be a ravaged land
Our rights will die for the money he craves

Justice is blind he's taught to understand
This he believes from all that he's seen
How else can waters flood all the land
Which for thousands of years his fathers kept clean

Who can this be who destroys all the land?
Who promises life as he drowns all our graves
In whose wake shall be a ravaged land
Our land will die for the money he craves

by Robbie Niquanicappo - 1993

Return of the Odeyak



One day, a Cree chief launched a challenge to a cabinet minister in Quebec to decide which of the two peoples could cross the St-Lawrence the fastest by canoe. The Cree team consisted of: four rowers and one "head rower" (nii-shtaa-muhchaau). Laughing, the Quebec minister announced his team: one rower, two department chiefs, one director and one assistant deputy minister.

Half-way, the Crees were 10 minutes ahead. To catch up, the Quebec team added another department head (to stimulate and encourage the rower).

Three-quarters of the way across, the Crees were 20 minutes ahead; something had to be done!

A call was placed to the deputy minister: We must motivate the rower.

At the end of the race, the Crees won hands-down: They arrived 30 minutes ahead of the Quebec side. What happened? The minister had to know! So he got his deputy minister to hire an outside firm of experts to explain the causes of the defeat.

After pouring hundreds of thousands of dollars into a study that took several months, the problem was found: The organization of work had failed, productivity was not good and communications were bad between management and employees.

So they eliminated the job of the rower.

— Anonymous by request

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GRAND COUNCIL OF THE CREES (OF QUEBEC)

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CREE REGIONAL AUTHORITY

A Brief Look at Cree Government

The Grand Council of the Crees (of Quebec) is the political arm and voice of the Cree Nation and was duly incorporated on August 16, 1974. It represents the Cree Nation and is mandated to protect and advance our rights and interests at the regional, national and international level. The council board is made up of the Grand Chief, Matthew Coon Come, Deputy Grand Chief Kenny Blacksmith, the chiefs from the nine Cree communities plus one other designated person from each community.

On the federal level, the Grand Council has to oversee that Ottawa carries out its fiduciary, legal, and political obligations including those stipulated under the terms of the JBNQA, as this agreement is constitutionally entrenched and Ottawa is legally bound to enforce and implement it. The Grand Council also oversees other international agreements, to which Canada is a signatory, that affect Aboriginal Nations, directly or indirectly.

At the regional or provincial level the Grand Council deals with the government of Quebec and other governmental agencies that are under the jurisdiction of the provincial government, such as Hydro-Quebec. Other areas that it must deal with are development, exploitation and extraction of natural resources. These areas are claimed by the provincial government and have a big impact on the Cree Nation and other First Nations living within the province of Quebec. The Grand Council also has to ensure that the government of Quebec, Hydro-Quebec and other agencies live up to their obligations under the constitution of Canada and under the JBNQA and the other complimentary agreements.

Human Rights

In the international arena, the Cree Nation was the first aboriginal Nation to be granted non-governmental organization status in the United Nations. This means that we can make recommendations to the members of various committees, panels, and groups within the U.N., but they are not necessarily bound to act on these. However, many have been incorporated as part of international law or included in draft proposals.

Ted Moses, the Cree ambassador, has been instrumental in bringing out the issues of human rights to the international community. There are numerous laws and covenants that were created by the U.N. to protect and promote human rights. These basic human rights are guaranteed to every human on this planet, regardless of race, creed, religion, beliefs, sex or colour. The Cree Nation has played a pivotal role in the promotion and protection of human and indigenous rights, here and abroad.

The Grand Council is working to ensure that Canada abolishes or amends the present laws that govern First Nations of this country. These are discriminatory, paternalistic and archaic and must be made to meet the emerging standards of international law. These changes must reflect the new reality and the legitimate concerns and needs of the First Nations of this country. The Grand Council, working with the other First Nations and the provincial and federal governments, will strive to find just and equitable solutions to the many problems that confront the First Nations of this country and around the world.

NEXT ISSUE: The Cree Regional Authority

paid advertisement

Black Sabbath
not so evil

When I was growing up, Black Sabbath always seemed like the most evil band on earth. The rumor was that when they came to town, they had the same effect as a visit from Dracula. The insane would escape from local mental hospitals and make their way to the concert hall, where they would listen to Ozzy Osbourne sing.

Well, Ozzy is gone now and Black Sabbath isn't the same. They were in Montreal last week playing at the Metropolis as part of a concert tour promoting their latest album, *Cross Purposes*. Guitarist Tony Iommi and bassist Geezer Butler—two Black Sabbath veterans—played up a storm, although they looked like their bones are getting a bit stiff in their old age. But the new singer, Tony Martin, just didn't cut it. No offense, Tony, but you're just not evil enough.

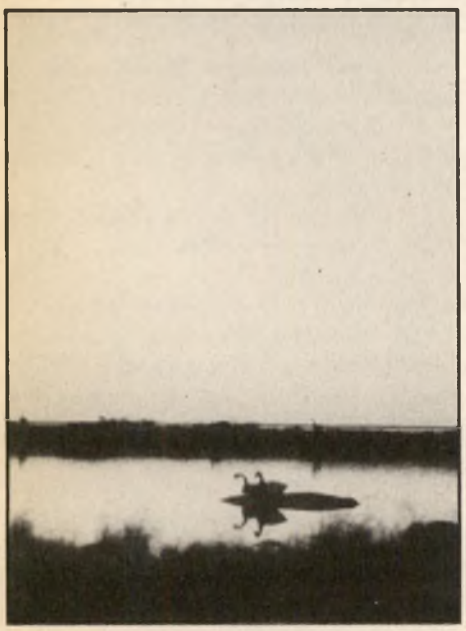
Tony Martin (see photo, second from left) looks more like a kindly Grade 1 teacher or a corner-store clerk than someone who bites the head off a rat. You could never imagine him hanging out with bikers or recording secret satanic messages on his albums. He's the type of person who helps out with the boy scouts and volunteers at the church in his spare time. Not that those things are bad. But that's the point. They're not bad at all. And the lead singer of Black Sabbath is someone who should embody Everything That Is Evil.

On the other hand, Motorhead was in fine form, demonstrating yet again why they are the best heavy metal band there is. They started things off with *Ace of Spades*, and just kept cooking. Motorhead is just as old as Black Sabbath but they never lose their energy. Lemmy might be getting a bit pudgy, but at least he still doesn't know how to sing.

Let's hope he never learns. If I wanted a pretty voice, I'd listen to Michael Bolton (or his twin brother, Tony Martin). The only problem is Motorhead was only opening for Black Sabbath (it should have been the other way around) and so they played for only 45 minutes.

Before Motorhead was Morbid Angel, which is apparently a very good speed metal band. Too bad we missed them. Next time, don't start the concert at 7.

— Alex Roslin



Johnny Kistabish remembered

We just learned that a good friend has passed away. Johnny Kistabish had complications following an appendix operation. He got an infection during the operation and just never got better. Today, as I sit here, I remember Johnny's laughter. It dances in the dark corners of my mind lighting the shadows.

Johnny was much like that, an unexpected guest at times who had you enjoying life to the fullest when you least expected it.

It doesn't mean that "Johnny Rotten" or "Judge Rotten," as he was at times called, didn't have his serious sides, but that we all remember Johnny for how good he made us feel in just being.

His generosity was always taken for granted. I remember one time staying with about nine other people in Johnny's apartment when I first arrived in Montreal. He never complained. That was Johnny. He never lost that tradition of native hospitality no matter how long or far away he was from his people.

It was with remorse that we learned Johnny passed away. Johnny was one of the bright stars in the Cree world and his physical presence will be missed, but his spirit will live on in our hearts.

— Will Nicholls

TEE VEE DROPS IN ON CHISASIBI

Janelle Dakota Jacknife House during the start of a new season of *North Of 60*. Janelle was born on Sept. 16, 1992.

Dakota House arrived in town just before 2 p.m. Dakota, who plays the character TeeVee on the CBC show *North Of 60*, was exhausted after the long trip from Edmonton and his overnight stay in Montreal. He was picked up by Nellie Pachano at La Grande Airport.

When he first arrived in Chisasibi, he was taken to his motel room. There, he realized he had taken the wrong luggage from the airport. When he opened the bag, it was filled with women's clothing. Someone went to the airport to find his bag and bring it to him.

From the motel, Dakota went to have lunch at Bonnie Fireman's place. Before he arrived, he thought he was coming to a warm climate. He was soon to realize he was wrong. The average temperature in Edmonton was -25 to -31 degrees Celsius. One morning in Chisasibi, he woke up to a hazy morning of -45 degrees Celsius and just wanted to stay in bed. The first day he was here, Dakota was taken on a tour of Chisasibi. The next day he was scheduled to have discussions with the classes. He was asked many questions by the students...

How did you first get started?

Three years ago, my mom saw this ad in the paper. It was calling on young native actors and models 14 to 15 years of age. I had no experience in either of them. The only acting I did was in a school play. I remember once in grade 3, I played Santa Claus. I had no Santa boots, so I had to wear rubber boots. That was probably the extent of that. So I called up this place and I made arrangements to audition. I did my first audition with Betty Chadwick. After two auditions, I got an acting scholarship at the other agency for 10 weeks. That was basically to get me over my shyness and learn about what's behind the scenes and what to expect.

How do you like it here?

The people are friendly. It's quiet and cold. But I like the cold.

Do you have any brothers or sisters?

Yes, I do. There's Reco and Nevada, who are 17 and 15 years old. ...

At this point, Beverly and Christina burst out laughing. Dakota asked, "Why are they laughing?" I think a few people figured out why they were laughing! He also mentioned that he lived in the same house as his family. Both he and his girlfriend, Tonya Jacknife, live there with their baby girl. Tonya gave birth to

...When is your birthday?

My birthday is on February 17. I will be 20 years old.

Is that your real baby on the show?

No, it's not. The baby we use on the show is supposed to be a girl, but it's really a boy! I really do enjoy children, not like my character, TeeVee. It's hard being mean to a baby on the show. During the cuts I tell the baby to come here and play with him. ...

...After the little chat, Dakota asked me a question: "How did you feel when you first met me?" I told him I felt shy at first. As I got to know him better, it was like talking to an old buddy I haven't seen for a while. I felt comfortable talking to him and he was very outgoing.

Later that night I met him again at the Youth Centre where there was a dance going on. I asked him if he can dance. But he told me only to slow songs. So I asked the DJ if he could play a slow song. When the song played, he was asked to dance and many girls kept cutting in during one song. He was just about to leave with the police officer for a ride around town before he went back to his hotel room. I said my good-byes and told him to have a good trip.

I wish him the best in his acting career and to his family.

BY ANGELA HOUSE

Masters...

Photo by Luis Eguren

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

Would the Crees be better off if they didn't sign the Agreement in 1975?

It may have been better to wait and allow later generations to deal with the issue. But we can hardly blame our leaders, given the situation of our people at the time. The impacts of the government's brainwashing policies had taken their toll. We had adapted to the welfare mentality developed with the welfare offices present in each community. We had been hit hard with foreign diseases disabling many of our people from continuing their traditional way of life, and that only modern medicine could heal. Alcohol had taken its effect. It was perfect timing for the governments to come in with much pressure and offer seemingly large sums of money. The governments were capitalizing on our weaknesses and ignorance. Did we have any choice? I don't think so. Did we know or understand what was happening? No. Did we ratify the Agreement with a full knowledge of its contents and its implications? Of course not!

Do you think the complementary agreements which amended the Agreement further legitimized the surrender and extinguishment clauses?

Sometimes it is said that because Hydro-Quebec comes to the Crees for a signature each time they needed a new project or a project change, this has preserved the principle of Cree consent to further development. I don't buy this at all.

As time goes on, if we keep signing agreements, it will be argued in 1994 or 1996 that we accepted extinguishment for once and for all. I don't accept that, but it will be argued.

The fact is, "surrender and extinguishment" is mentioned in the Agreement. We have to deal with that. But more importantly, the Agreement is not cast in stone. Neither are the complementary agreements. If a constitution of a nation-state can be changed or modified under the process of law as the Canadian constitution was changed in 1982, the same can be at any time to the James Bay Agreement. Nobody is telling Quebec the constitution can't ever be changed because what they signed in 1876 no longer meets their aspirations. What was Meech and Charlottetown all about?

The parties to the Agreement must come together and study the events surrounding its formulation and propose the necessary changes to correct the wrongs. If this is not done, the human and economic costs will be enormous, and there will never be social peace in Quebec.

The complementary agreements are a sign that the original Agreement did not establish the kind of relationship that we thought we got with the governments of Quebec and Canada. They are also a sign that the governments did not fulfil their obligations under the Agreement.

They promised they would provide us with the essential services our communities need, and yet in 1994, Chisasibi, the most impacted community by hydroelectric development, is still without proper sanitation facilities. There is still inadequate housing in the Cree communities, our economic ventures are not viable and so on. Isn't that enough of a proof that the governments are not willing to work with us?

What is your reaction to the Inuit negotiations on the proposed Great Whale River Project?

I have deep respect for the Inuit. I am not aware of the nature of these negotiations. But I think they are only conducted for public-relations purposes in favour of Hydro-Quebec.

There are several outstanding issues that have not been resolved under the agreement between the Inuit of Kuujjuarapik and the Whapmagoostui Crees, particularly the Areas of Primary Interest above the 55th parallel. The aboriginal rights of the Whapmagoostui Crees over the area in question are still intact.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24

...of Conquest

Photo by:Luis Eguren

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

The most productive traditional Cree hunting grounds and the burial sites of our ancestors are in question. Hydro-Quebec is negotiating with the Inuit as if we do not have any rights over this area. I would assume the costs of these negotiations are budgeted under "Public Relations" at Hydro-Quebec. [laughter]...

Again, it's a tactic by Hydro-Quebec to spend as much money as possible so that, once again, the "balance of convenience" argument can work in their favour. We can learn a lot from these negotiations about the tactics of the proponents of these projects.

If you look at the transcript of the hearing on the proposed Great Whale Project, you will see that not one single Inuit person is in favour of this project. I don't wish to seem critical of the Inuit leadership, but I think they need to listen more to the people they represent.

How can the Crees correct the flaws of the James Bay Agreement, especially the extinguishment clause?

As I pointed out earlier, the extinguishment clause in the Agreement, and it is true for all treaties containing such clauses, is a historic tactic of the government to take possession of resources on aboriginal lands over the long-term.

"Extinguishment" has been interpreted by the courts in Canada, but only in terms of the laws made by governments which are doing the extinguishing, and of course they say it's legal. The problem while waiting for its interpretation in light of the current understandings of human rights is that, in the meantime, developments eat away at aboriginal lands. It's done so it eats away our soul.

And there is always the danger that the courts will interpret extinguishment in favour of the Canadian nation-state, because courts are necessarily instruments of the nation-state itself.

What's the best way to deal with the issue of extinguishment?

Because of the way the courts are, I think aboriginal peoples have a far better chance of settling outstanding aboriginal issues through the exercise of our political power. We Crees have done it on Great Whale, in Canada and internationally. We can do it if we are unified and strong.

I also think it is critical to deal with this now. The Crees must sit down and have very serious discussions among themselves on the issue. The Crees have to someday make certain declarations on their own under Cree law and existing international instruments. Because our lands, resources and way of life are now threatened, we have to determine our own political status, as well as economic, social and cultural development.

It is important to keep in mind international awareness is increasing about the need to recognize the rights of indigenous peoples in a United Nations universal declaration. Once this has happened, it will no doubt be useful in establishing a perpetual relationship of mutual respect and understanding with the nation-state governments.

What we ought to be looking for is a meaningful relationship, a real partnership between us and the nation-state. With one dominating the other and imposing paternalistic actions, as was done on the part of the governments back in the early 70s, this is not possible. We must deal with each other as equals.

Classifieds

100-Births

Congratulations to Eva & Morley on their new baby boy, Tyron, born on Feb. 9/94, 9 lbs 6 oz. From Charlie, Deborah, Shannon and Charlene.

101-Birthday Greetings

Happy birthday greetings from Gordon Gilpin to my wife, Rose Dixon-Gilpin, on Feb. 27. Thinking of you on your birthday.

Happy Birthday to:Doreen Shashaweskan Feb 3, Sam Visitor Feb. 5, Ida Stephen Feb. 7, Elizabeth Shashaweskum Feb. 10, Gloria Asquabaneskum & Candace Danyluk Feb. 15, Paula Atsynia Feb. 18, Joseph Shanush Feb. 28, Marc Blackned Feb. 28.

101-Birthday Greetings

Happy birthday to Mina Tapiatic on February 18. 92 years young! From Lily Bobbish & all of the family.

Happy Birthday to my sweet little girl Valentina, who will be 1 year old on March 9, from Ouje-Bougoumou, Quebec. We love you! Mom, Dad & Bro.

Happy Birthday!!!! Brandon Wapachee, March 7 and Norman A. Wapachee March 6 from Ouje-Bougoumou. With love, Suzanne, Ryan and Michael. XOXOXO.....

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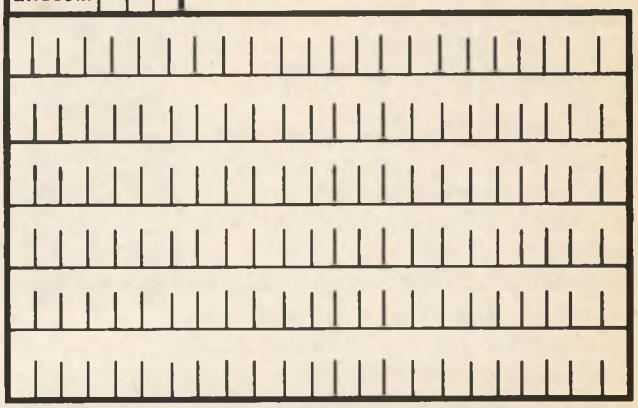

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SPORTS

MOUNTAIN BIKE MARATHON TO KICK OFF IN MISTISSINI

The organizers of the Mountain Bike Marathon Challenge '94 have announced that the third edition of the event is taking place this July 22 and 23. The two-day event consists of children's mountain bike racing competitions on July 22, followed by the 110-kilometre Bike Marathon Challenge from Chibougamau to Mistissini Lake on July 23. The organizers include the Mistissini Youth Council, the recreation department of the Mistissini Band, the Mistissini Mewatshewn Running Club and other volunteers.

The event is intended to promote intercultural exchange, enhance fitness and health, promote and establish friendships, and promote alternatives to alcohol and drugs.

Several new categories of prizes will be awarded this year. Two new categories were created for the Bike Marathon. First category is available to overall winners, men and women, native and non-natives (first place is $1,500, second place is $1,000 and third place is $500). Second category is offered only to First Nations participants, men and women (first place is $1,000, second place $100 and third place is $50).

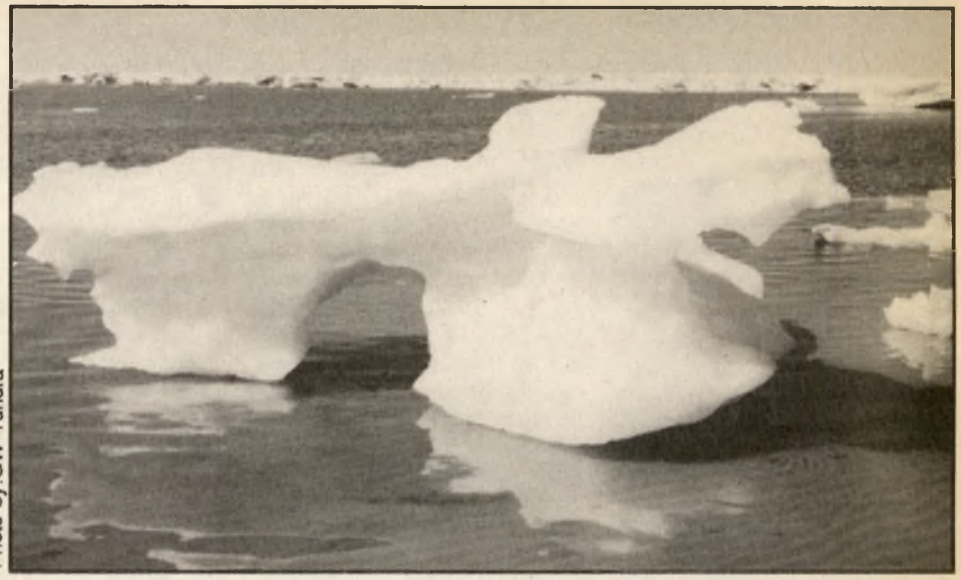

Photo by:GW Tundra

For the children's 4-kilometre event, prizes are offered to boys and girls, native and non-native (first place $100, second place $50 and third place $35). In the 8-km event, boys and girls, natives and non-natives, first place is $150, second place $75 and third place $50. The 18-km event boys and girls, natives and non-natives: first place $200, second $100 and third $50.

Registration procedures and itinerary will be announced in upcoming months. For more info, contact event organizers c/o Mountain Bike Challenge '94, 184 Main St., Mistissini Lake, Baie du Poste, Quebec, G0W 1C0. Tel.: 418-923-2274. Fax: 418- 923-3115.

COMICS

GARFIELD® by Jim Davis

I KNOW JON SAID NO MORE SNACKS
JIM DAVIS 2-17
BUT I HAD A WEAK MOMENT
SOMEONE TORE THE DOOR OFF THE REFRIGERATOR!
A WEAK YET INTENSE MOMENT
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FRANK & ERNEST® by Bob Thaves

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PROPOSED GREAT WHALE PROJECT

PUBLIC NOTICE

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE PROPOSED GREAT WHALE HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

The Commissions and Committees charged with the environmental assessment of the proposed Great Whale Project invite all interested parties who wish to participate in the review of the quality and conformity of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), submitted by the Proponent, Hydro-Québec, to submit their comments.

During this review, the Committees and Commissions must verify whether the EIS is complete and conforms to the Guidelines given to the Proponent in September 1992. The EIS must be sufficient and of adequate quality to proceed to the next step of the review, which is the assessment of the proposed Project itself. Copies of the Guidelines and of the EIS are available for consultation in several libraries and documentation centres as well as with the Support Office liaison officer in Whapmagoostui.

DATE: This public consultation will last 130 days, from February 15 to June 27, 1994.

MODALITIES:

comments and opinions at this time should concern the conformity and quality of the EIS. The evaluation of the proposed project and its justification will be the object of public hearings at a later date;

if possible, briefs should be accompanied by a copy of the brief on diskette(s), as well as a summary in English or French, if a translation of the original cannot be provided;

it would be appreciated if briefs were filed as early as possible in the review period;

briefs should be mailed to the Great Whale Public Review Support Office at 1155 Sherbrooke St. West, Suite 1603, Montreal, Quebec, H3A 2N3.

Within the 50 days following this written consultation, the Committees and Commissions will draft their recommendations and submit them to the appropriate authorities. The Commissions and Committees may recommend to either a) declare the EIS in conformity with the Guidelines and of sufficient quality to hold public hearings on the proposed project or b) to address additionnal questions to the Proponent, requiring it to provide clarifications or additions to the EIS.

For more information, please contact the Great Whale Public Review Support Office at 819-929-3315 (in Whapmagoostui) or toll free at 1-800-265-5231, or by fax at 514-496-5251.